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PAGE 01 CAIRO 07932 121142Z

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
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CAIRO 7932

EXDIS **DECAPTIONED**

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR EG MX
SUBJECT: ECHEVERRIA ON DIRECT EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI TALKS
REF: CAIRO 7841

1. FOLLOWING MEXICAN PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S RECENT VISIT TO EGYPT AND SUBSEQUENT TRIP TO ISRAEL, ISRAELI PRESS ALLEGEDLY REPORTED THAT ECHEVERRIA WAS ARRANGING A MEETING BETWEEN SADAT AND RABIN. THESE REPORTS WERE SUFFICIENTLY WORRISOME THAT GOE PRESS SPOKESMAN FORMALLY ANNOUNCED AUGUST 11 ALL SUCH ALLEGATIONS WERE A "BASELESS CREATION OF THE IMAGINATION."

2. SADAT TOLD THE AMBASSADOR YESTERDAY THAT, IN THE COURSE OF ECHEVERRIA'S VISIT TO ISRAEL, RABIN APPARENTLY TOLD THE THE MEXICAN PRESIDENT THAT PEACE COULD EASILY BE ARRANGED IF THERE WERE DIRECT ARAB-ISRAELI TALKS. THIS HAD SO IMPRESSED ECHEVERRIA, WHOSE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI PROBLEM IS LIMITED, THAT HE HAD IMMEDIATELY SENT HIS FONMIN BACK TO EGYPT TO INFORM SADAT OF THIS "DISCOVERY" AND TO SUGGEST SUCH DIRECT TALKS BE ARRANGED. SADAT RECEIVED THE MEXICAN FONMIN, "SINCE ECHEVERRIA HAD BEEN THOUGHTFUL ENOUGH TO SEND HIM ON THIS SPECIAL TRIP," BUT PATIENTLY EXPLAINED THE SITUATION TO HIS VISITOR.

PAGE 02 CAIRO 07932 121142Z

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3. SO LONG AS ARAB TERRITOR IS OCCUPIED, THE PRESIDENT POINTED OUT, THERE CAN BE NO DIRECT ARAB-ISRAELI TALKS. IF RABIN FIRST ANNOUNCES ISRAELI WILLINGNESS TO WITHDRAW FROM ALL OF THE TERRITORIES OCCUPIED IN THE 1967 WAR, THEN SUCH DIRECT TALKS MAY BE POSSIBLE. WITHOUT THIS, THEY ARE NOT. SINCE THE ISRAELIS ARE OBVIOUSLY NOT WILLING TO MAKE SUCH AN ANNOUNCEMENT, SADAT EXPLAINED TO THE MEXICAN THAT HE MUST DEPEND UPON THE USG AS A NECESSARY GO-BETWEEN. HE HAD PRAISED SECRETARY KISSINGER'S EFFORTS AND HAD THANKED ECHEVERRIA FOR HIS INTEREST. EILTS

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** [REDACTED]

*** Current Classification *** [REDACTED]

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